

Questions and Responses for BAA_2016-N-17770

1. The BAA indicates that offerors may submit up to two concept papers. Does “offeror” refer to individual PIs or to institutions?

An “Offeror” refers to an institution or organization. Examples include for-profit and non-profit organizations, state or local agencies, institutions of higher education, research institutes, and consulting firms. For universities, an Offeror should be an organizational unit such as an academic department, a multi-departmental school or program, or an interdisciplinary research center. An “Offeror” is not an individual PI for purposes of this solicitation.

2. If two concept papers are submitted, should the estimated costs identify the costs associated with each proposed project?

Yes, each concept paper must contain a cost estimate.

3. What is the submission process for concept papers? Is it simply an email to you at this address?
Yes, per the Concept Paper Submission instructions, you must submit the concept papers to the Contracting Officer’s email address, srandall@cdc.gov

4. The BAA is clear that the maximum project period should not exceed 36 months and the maximum award should not exceed \$1,500,000.
 - a. How many awards does the CDC plan to make under this BAA or total money does it plan to dedicate to this project?

Multiple awards will be made under this BAA, with each award limited to \$1,500,000. The total number of awards will depend upon the quality of concept papers and proposals received, funding availability, and the funding requirements of the individual projects.

5. Many academic research centers such as ours are familiar with conducting federally sponsored research and applying for grants through standard NIH and PHS mechanisms. Since this is a contract rather than a grant award:
 - a. Would our existing federally negotiated indirect cost rates apply for this solicitation or is there an alternate indirect cost rate or cap on indirect through this mechanism?

Your existing federally negotiated indirect cost rates apply for this solicitation.

- b. Will any overhead or indirect costs associated with this proposal be paid above the \$1,500,000 funding cap or should budgets be prepared that are inclusive of any or all indirect costs?

Budgets should be prepared at the \$1,500,000.00 funding cap. There will be no additional costs paid beyond the funding cap.

6. Since collaboration with CDC officials seems an important part of this project, should we identify potential CDC-based collaborators prior to submitting a concept paper or would the CDC assign personnel based on their interest in our research proposals after submission?

Offerors *may*, but are not *required* to, suggest potential CDC collaborators. CDC will consider such suggestions if a concept paper submission results in a request for a proposal that is ultimately selected for award. However, the assignment of collaborators will be at CDC discretion. CDC will make determinations regarding the assignment of scientific personnel to collaborate on projects, including the extent of collaborative involvement, based on relevant subject matter expertise, interest, and availability of staff.

7. Our background and strength is in the area of information security and assurance related to health related areas. Specifically, we have approximately 4-1/2 years working on information security topics related to health related systems at NIH; and total of more than 30 years in Information Security. We can propose work related to providing information protection and secure processing, storage of health- related information compliant to Government requirements in the event of Public Health Emergencies. We have read with interest your section on Page 24, Notice Regarding IT Security. We wanted to confirm whether this topic is within the scope of this BAA? Can you please confirm?

The Notice Regarding IT Security refers to the information systems security and privacy policies and requirements to which any entity receiving a contract under this BAA must adhere. This is not a research topic within the scope of this announcement. The topics in scope under this solicitation, along with related information about the CDC's interests, are described on pages 7-10.

8. I am writing in hopes to find out if the following contractor/contract number are currently performing the services for the above requirement? If not, could I please find out the contractor name and contract number? I appreciate your time and help.

There is no contractor or contract number associated with this Broad Agency Announcement.

9. The BAA indicates that offerors may submit up to two concept papers. Does "offeror" refer to individual PIs or to institutions?

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10. If two concept papers are submitted, should the estimated costs identify the costs associated with each proposed project?

Yes.

11. What is the submission process for concept papers? Is it simply an email to you at this address?

Yes, per the Concept Paper Submission instructions, you must submit the concept papers to the Contracting Officer's email address, srandall@cdc.gov

12. What is the overall budget ceiling inclusive of all Research Areas of Interest described in Part II of the BAA?

The budget ceiling per individual award is \$1,500,000.00. Ceilings are not designated by the research areas of interest and there is no pre-set distribution of awards by topic area.

13. Among the Research Areas of Interests in Part II of the BAA, what are the Agency's research priorities with respect to the research categories and/or specific bulleted research questions?

The broad domains and individual research topic areas listed on pages 7-8 are of equal priority for purposes of this solicitation and concept papers will be accepted for any of the categories and specific bulleted questions. (The order that they are listed in this BAA does not suggest their level of importance). As described in the BAA, for whatever topic that an Offeror chooses to address, the government is interested in research that answers questions or addresses problems of current relevance to the field and will yield knowledge useful for improving the ability of CDC and its partners to prepare for and respond to public health emergencies or disasters. Refer to page 8-10 for additional information.

14. If an offeror intends to be a subcontractor or partner with another organization, can the joint-team submit more than two (2) Concept Papers?

The Offeror should submit no more than 2 concept papers, regardless of potential subcontractors. Only one entity can be the primary recipient of an award (the "prime" under the contract). However, an organization that is proposed as a subcontractor or an informal partner under another entity's proposal is not restricted from submitting its own concept papers, if they are distinct and independent from the first entity's submissions.

15. Retrospectively, can the Agency provide a range of budget for individual research studies that were sponsored through CDC BAAs?

That information is not relevant to this BAA. Projects should be scoped based on the level of effort necessary to address the research questions, and awards can vary considerably. The parameters for this BAA are described in detail within the announcement.

16. How many awards does the CDC anticipate awarding?

CDC anticipates multiple awards will be made under this BAA.

17. In the past, what has been the cost range of typical awards for research projects developed through such a BAA process?

That information is not relevant to this BAA. Projects should be scoped based on the level of effort and period of performance necessary to address the research questions that the Offeror is proposing to address and the deliverables to be provided to the government. The range of awards can vary considerably.

18. Does CDC anticipate a funding range for each awarded project?

The Ceiling of Award Range is 1,500,000.00 per award. Projects may be proposed and awarded for any amount up to the ceiling.

19. Is a title page allowable for the concept paper or are the descriptive title of the proposed project, number, and title of the announcement included in the four page limit.

If a separate title page is included, it will not count as a part of the four page limit.

20. Can tables and figures be in a font smaller than 12 point as long as they are legible?

Tables and figures may use font no smaller than 10 point. Text must be 12-point.

21. Even though it is the intent of the BAA to focus on issues within the U.S., can the research project include sites or data from other countries?

Proposed projects can utilize data from other countries, if relevant to the topic. However, as stated in the announcement, projects should focus on preparedness and response issues within the United States and with aim of addressing problems or knowledge gaps important to domestic preparedness, response, and recovery.

22. Can partners in the proposed research include units and staff of federal agencies besides CDC?

Offerors may suggest potential collaboration with other federal agencies, but any such collaboration with units or staff of federal agencies outside CDC will be solely at CDC's discretion. CDC, as the sponsor and funding agency for this BAA, will retain leadership over all contracts made under this announcement. CDC cannot ensure that resources from other agencies will be made available. Therefore, projects that require substantive participation by other federal agencies for successful completion should not be proposed.

23. My first question is around the six research interest areas and scope of the concept paper. Is your expectation that a) the concept paper address ***all*** of the bullets/issues you described for a research interest area or b) are you also interested in concept papers that focus on a few of the bullets/issues under a research interest area?

As stated on page 7 of the BAA, a concept paper may address any single "bulleted" topic within a category or it may address multiple bulleted topics in the category if they can be

feasibly connected and addressed within the proposed project. Offerors are expected to further develop the selected topic(s) into well-defined research questions.

24. Are you interested in concept papers that integrates bullets/issues from more than one research interest area?

Offerors should focus primarily on addressing one or multiple bulleted topics/questions from within a given domain (i.e., one of the six broad areas). However, concept papers that accomplish this while also touching upon bulleted topics/questions from another broad domain will not be excluded from consideration.

25. Are you thinking that the proposed concepts address Health Care Coalition hospital preparedness issues directly or is this a parallel effort?

The focus of this BAA is public health preparedness, response, and recovery. However this can include topics of relevance to hospital, health care coalition, and health delivery system preparedness, since some salient issues are entwined with public health. Areas where the public health and health care delivery systems interface or must coordinate for improving preparedness, response and recovery outcomes are germane to this BAA.

26. How many awards does CDC anticipate awarding under this BAA, and is there an expectation for how awards will be distributed across the 6 areas of CDC research interests?

CDC anticipates multiple awards. There is no pre-set distribution of awards across the 6 broad research domains listed in the BAA. CDC seeks to make awards for the projects of highest relevance to agency needs and greatest merit, regardless of distribution of awards across topic areas.

27. Can you please share information about the focus of previous BAA applied research awards, for example terms of reference, awardees and knowledge generated?

That information is not relevant to this BAA. Previous BAAs have varied in aims, topics, recipients of funding, and desired outcomes. The parameters for this BAA are described in detail within the announcement.

28. There are many potential ways of segmenting and defining target populations for disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Does CDC have an existing segmentation? Which population segments (e.g. vulnerable and at risk) is the CDC most concerned to advance preparedness, response and recovery capacity? How does CDC define these population segments?

Offerors are not required to utilize a particular CDC segmentation or approach to defining target populations for preparedness, response, and recovery activities. CDC does have interest in vulnerable and at risk populations but no particular vulnerable/at risk population is prioritized above others for purposes of this BAA, due to the breadth of potential topics that Offerors may choose to address. However, as described in the announcement, topics should address questions and problems of high importance to the field currently, which may include

topics related to those populations that are highest risk or represent most the pressing public health needs in particular kinds of adverse events and/or in specific geographies.

29. In a sense, this BAA is seeking research to identify effective innovations in approaches to health emergency preparedness, response and recovery. For the purposes of this BAA, what is the CDC's relative interest in innovations that (1) optimize current "core" approaches without dramatically changing them, versus (2) adapt and extend current approaches, without radically changing them, versus (3) transformational innovations that may involve adoption of entirely new technologies and processes, or fundamentally change current approaches?

CDC is particularly interested in new applications of science, technologies, and innovations that have the potential to substantially contribute to CDC's goals as described in the BAA. Projects that address unresolved questions and lead to new processes are especially desirable. However optimizing or extending current approaches may also lead to improvement in some problem areas. In all cases, CDC is interested in projects that lead to results that can significantly impact the field, can be feasibly translated, and which can make a difference.

30. Could you describe for me at which level the term "Offeror" is being defined in the Concept RFP since a limitation of 2 Concept Sheets has been imposed? Is it defined at the Individual, School or University level?

An "Offeror" refers to an institution or organization. Examples include for-profit and non-profit organizations, state or local agencies, institutions of higher education, research institutes, and consulting firms. For universities, an Offeror should be an organizational unit such as an academic department, a multi-departmental school or program, or an interdisciplinary research center. An "Offeror" is not an individual PI for purposes of this solicitation.

31. Can you please advise if a PHEP Awardee jurisdiction (i.e. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health) is prohibited from applying for this funding opportunity?

PHEP awardee jurisdictions may apply for this research funding opportunity. This funding opportunity is distinct from the CDC PHEP Cooperative Agreement. Keep in mind that a Contract(s) will be awarded from this BAA and not a Cooperative Agreement.

32. The BAA states that each offeror may submit no more than two concept papers, but it doesn't define offeror. Is "offeror" considered an individual investigator, or does this BAA limit no more than two concept papers submitted per institution?

An "Offeror" refers to an institution or organization. Examples include for-profit and non-profit organizations, state or local agencies, institutions of higher education, research institutes, and consulting firms. For universities, an Offeror should be an organizational unit at minimum at the level of an academic department, a multi-departmental school or program, or an interdisciplinary research center. An "Offeror" is not an individual PI for purposes of this solicitation.

33. The BAA requests a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) for the pricing. Can you clarify if you are looking for a top-level general estimate (guesstimation) that is based on similar project of the approximate same scope? Or are you requesting a more specific estimate that list out the details of cost?

The Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate does not require a complex analysis or detailed list of costs. The ROM should provide an approximation of the top-level total cost, based on experience with prior projects of similar scope and complexity. High level categories of costs may optionally be provided to explain how the ROM estimate was derived, but are not required for the ROM.

34. We would like clarification of the definition of the term “offeror” in the BAA. Does it refer to organizations or individual principle investigators ? We have 6 PIs in our organization who would be interested in submitting concept papers. Are we limited only 2?

An “Offeror” refers to an institution or organization. Examples include for-profit and non-profit organizations, state or local agencies, institutions of higher education, research institutes, and consulting firms. For universities, an Offeror should be an organizational unit at minimum at the level of an academic department, a multi-departmental school or program, or an interdisciplinary research center. An “Offeror” is not an individual PI for purposes of this solicitation.

35. Regarding the concept paper submission, can you clarify this requirement, specifically the characteristics" aspect? "Project description briefly addressing the parameters and characteristics identified in Part I, as relevant to the work proposed." Is there an example of how you would like that formatted?

Detailed instructions on the content and format of concept papers are provided on pages 13-14 of the BAA. Within the concept paper, the Offeror should ensure that the parameters and characteristics identified on pages 8-9 (“What We Are Looking For”) are addressed. It is not necessary to address all points in a systematic manner, but the content of the concept paper should sufficiently address or incorporate the points on pages 8-9, as applicable to the proposed project.

36. We are wondering about the collaboration with CDC scientific staff on the submission itself as we do have use agreement in place with CDC OPHPR allowing CDC use of our tool for its mission. Is it possible to develop a concept submission with CDC staff related to CDC's prior interest and use of our system?

CDC may discuss concept papers with Offerors, at the discretion of the government. The Contracting Officer will facilitate such discussions. Offerors may propose projects that involve the use of tools or other products developed through previous work funded by CDC. However, recipients of funding under this announcement will be required to comply with the stipulations of this BAA and the terms of the contract. Data, tools, and other products generated under a contract become the property of the U.S. government. If a formal proposal

is under consideration, CDC may opt to engage in discussions or negotiations with the Offeror, if necessary to resolve any potential conflicts related to prior agreements